



Brushing Your Pet's Teeth

Brushing

Use an appropriately-sized bristled toothbrush to remove plaque from the tooth surfaces with a rotating brushing action.

Steps to Brushing

Because every animal is unique, each step in this process may take days to weeks for your pet to become accustomed to them. Take "baby" steps – don't try to force too much too soon. Start gradually but do it every day. The most important thing is to establish a very regular habit of daily oral hygiene. Remember to use positive reinforcement – lots of praise, a treat, or a game can serve as a reward for having the teeth brushed and it will eventually become a "fun" activity.

1. Pet face & muzzle. Get your pet desensitized to having his/her head & face handled.
2. Lift lips to look at all of the teeth. You may need to start with just the front teeth (canines & incisors).
3. Open mouth to look at the roof of the mouth, tongue, & back of mouth.
4. Use only a finger to brush the teeth – no paste. Concentrate on where the tooth & gum come together.
5. Put animal toothpaste on your finger & begin to rub on the teeth as if brushing. Your pet will likely lick due to there being a substance – toothpaste – in the mouth.
6. Put animal toothpaste on an appropriately sized bristled toothbrush.

Plaque control is the secret to successful prevention of periodontal disease. In general, we can control plaque in three basic ways:

1. Mechanical – brushing or using Hill's T/D dental formula kibble. Brushing is the "Gold Standard" for plaque control.
2. Chemical – CET products; water additives like HealthyMouth™; Maxi/Guard
3. Barrier – OraVet wax barrier sealant

These methods can greatly improve your pet's dental health & reduce the frequency of professional treatments. Adequate & appropriate oral/dental care may not affect your pet's **quantity** of life, but it will definitely increase his or her **quality** of life.

If you don't have time to brush your pet's teeth, or they won't let you brush them, it's even more important to seek professional care at least yearly – more often when dental disease is already present.

(For more information please feel free to ask, or visit our website at adcva.com)

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